

As a person who has dealt with chronic pain for many years, I have often found myself standing in the middle of nowhere, with no one to turn to who understands the magnitude of this problem. In the majority of medical schools today, pain management is not even offered as a course of study or specialty. Because this is not taught, most physicians lack understanding the range of pain pathologies and treatments. Thus, it is exceedingly difficult for patients like myself to find doctors who both understand and practice a full range of pain management.

As such, we patients and pain management physicians follow long trials of both new and old medicines. We try different titrations, and unusual combinations that may leave us exhausted and unable to fulfill our life's wants and obligations. When the most standard courses of treatment do not work, some doctors frustration with their inability to treat the patient result in blaming the patient not the lack of efficacy in the course of action.

I consider myself one of the lucky ones. After years of trials, stopping and starting, and intense withdrawals, I have found that one doctor who truly understands pain and the significance and consequence of opiate medications. He has kept me on a specific combination that has changed the quality of my life. Instead of rolling around in bed in pain, or sleeping twenty hours out of the day, I have returned to an almost normal life. Once again, I can think clearly, understand complicated jokes and travel without using a wheelchair. My husband has a wife that is a full partner in our relationship.

However, some of the inappropriate use by a few is threatening the benefit of the many. You don't punish the innocent for the crimes and transgressions of the guilty. And so, I sit here today, in hope that others will not have to go through the trials and tribulations that I have. So others will have the life I now so richly enjoy. Please, it is imperative that the medical profession better understand these drugs we have out now,

before you take away the opiates and medications from the people its use was intended for.

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